

WSUC Committee Reports And Recommends

Introduction

During the past year, due chiefly to criticism of the present radio facilities, there has been a call for a Potsdam campus radio station. The answer to this call came in the proposal of a constitution and tentative budget for WSUC by Soupy Somers (Alan Goldstein). This committee, appointed by the president of Student Government, was then formed to investigate whether a campus radio station was needed and desired, or not. After consulting administrative, student, and ICRN personnel, the committee has come to a conclusion.

Recommendation

We, the members of the Student Government Association ad hoc committee on the proposed campus radio station (referred to as the WSUC committee) recommend to the Student Government Association that steps be taken as soon as possible for the establishment of a radio station on the Potsdam State Campus.

Administrative Views

One very important factor in the development of the radio station is the cooperation of or lack of it from the administration. With this in mind and in view of the findings we have already made, we interviewed Dean Barrington about the station.

Our questioning of him centered around several areas. Briefly, we asked him about the pos-

sible use of the station's facilities by the College as a teaching aid and so forth, and we asked him about possible financial aid, both in setting up the station initially, and in later operational costs.

Dean Barrington, at the outset, emphasized the College's interest in any radio station as an educational situation in much the same way that it views such things as THE RACQUETTE and the PIONEER. For this reason, he said, the radio station, regardless of whether Clarkson or Potsdam, should be student operated and provide the greatest amount of student participation possible. In regards to financial aid, he said that without the recommendations of Student Government, he was hesitant to give an answer. His reply to this seemed to indicate a possibility of financial aid by the school upon the recommendations of Student Government. Dean Barrington summed up by emphasizing the role of a student radio station in informing the students not only of affairs on campus, but also those outside the campus.

Inter-College Radio Network Views

Since the question of a new radio station arose out of criticism of and dissatisfaction with the present Inter-College Radio Network system policies, we felt it very important that the representatives of this organization be questioned to see if the difficulties could be overcome through them without changing

the present set-up drastically.

Our questions of ICRN were chiefly in regards to programming conflicts which had come up in the past. Thus our chief interest was in whether or not the student control of the network and WNTC could be made more equal between the two colleges and secondly we wished to know what was happening to our money. We also wanted to know if Potsdam-oriented programming could be expanded.

We were informed first of all that ICRN was undergoing a large reorganization and so attempts could be made to right some wrongs. The ICRN representatives were not encouraging about increased State influence. The present ruling limits Potsdam students to two out of a possible six positions on the Executive Board and excludes them from the Presidency of the Network. It was stated that any changes in this would have to go through both SGA and CCT Student Council, and that Clarkson College Council would not be likely to pass any increase in State representation.

ICRN told us that as far as the financial aspect goes, they would be perfectly willing to provide monthly reports of where money is being spent. They explained to us that we do not pay for any specific service of the Network. Our fee for each year is based on a percentage of the total budget. Thus, it is impossible to determine exactly what our money is used for.

In respect to the programming problems, experienced in the past year, the Clarkson rep-

resentatives explained that part of the difficulty was due to the lack of control over individual "DJ's" by Station Managers and Program Directors. ICRN is definitely willing to expand its programming in the future, if called upon, to include important campus issues, SGA reports, basketball games, and others. Naturally, these will have to be balanced with Clarkson programming of a similar nature.

Finally, as a point of future interest, the representatives of ICRN were asked whether or not a Potsdam College radio station could be incorporated in ICRN. The answer was that this would not be practical because of the overlapping of programming with the two stations which "cover most of the music interests of the students." It was also pointed out that due to the high operating costs of the present transmitters, that ICRN radio service to the Potsdam campus would have to be discontinued if Potsdam withdrew its funds from the Network.

Student Views

Since it is the students who must "pay the shot" it is necessary in setting up a station to know their views on the venture. Thus, during many "skull" sessions we brought up all the aspects of the question that we had heard, or expected to be questioned about. This "brainstorming" was climaxed by a questionnaire sent out to a significant sampling of the campus in the dorms and out-in-town (because of distribution problems, this segment was represented by the sorority and fraternity houses).

In our "brainstorming" the emphasis was on the desirability of increased time for programs of interest to Potsdam students. It was felt that because of the growth of campus size and student interest in general, that more means of communication on a daily basis is necessary to keep them informed of world and campus events. In addition, the proximity of a station provides a good opportunity in the case of emergencies, or just things that must be aired hurriedly. It was pointed out that Clarkson's programming cannot

be expanded to include all of the programming we desire with the present broadcasting hours. It was also felt in the committee that the proximity of a station would focus attention on it, therefore increasing participation and making it a more effective educational tool.

One of the chief disadvantages found in a new radio station aside from the unavoidable confusion of establishment is that because of the cost we would still be unable, at the outset, to provide out-in-town service.

The questionnaire provided some significant answers for us. The students were asked whether or not they were satisfied with the present service and responded with nearly a 50/50 distribution. There was an indication that participation in the station would increase significantly if the station were on campus. The distribution of those interested in more "State-oriented" programming was about 3 to 2 in favour, and the distribution of those interested in a campus radio station was about 3 to 1 in favour.

In summing up, it would appear that there is little question of student interest in a campus radio station and certainly a need is quite evident. It would also appear that this can be carried through without a lot of difficulty.

Points to Consider in the Establishment of the Section

1. In its early days the station should be watched very closely by the SGA either through a committee or a single person.

2. The proposed constitution and budget should be examined thoroughly and at least the Constitution be revised.

3. In the actual operation of the station, the possibility of tying in with Clarkson's newsroom should be considered. (for a fee, of course.)

4. In the near future, a plan should be devised whereby out-in-town students may receive the station.

5. ICRN does not recommend this move. It claims to be ready to provide Greek housing units with a monthly cost of two to two and one-half dollars.